

treatment and can best be dealt with, at least for the time being, by the parties most directly concerned. In its approach to international affairs, the United Nations has to take into account the reality of world politics, which in some cases makes direct negotiations preferable to United Nations involvement.

There are certain questions, however, which are the direct concern and responsibility of this Assembly. There are old questions such as disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, the elimination of racial discrimination, freedom for peoples who have never had it and for others who have lost it. There are also new questions raised with each passing year. But, whether old or new, they have their place in United Nations priorities and they all pose the question, with a compelling urgency: How can this collective United Nations response to international challenge best be fitted into the pattern of world affairs?

We must soon find the right answer to this question, for time may be running out on us. While most members recognize the proven value of the United Nations and want it to continue in effective being, with a substantial role in our world, there are signs of decline and deterioration which we would be foolish to ignore and which could threaten the future use of our organization, indeed its very existence.

Fortunately, however, there are also signs now of improvement in relations between the super-powers, which could give the United Nations new hope and new opportunity. There is a little more benevolence and a little less bitterness, and the Cold War is a little less frigid. The United Nations is, among other things, a unique political mirror reflecting, often magnifying, and occasionally distorting, the dreams and the distresses of men. So I wonder what the eighteenth session of the General Assembly will show.

#### Lessening of Tensions and Prospects for Future

The picture could be a brighter one. The feeling today of crisis and collision is not as oppressive as it has been in the recent past. There is an encouraging contrast between the international climate at the opening of this session of the General Assembly and that which hung like a dark shadow over the last or the one before that.

I know that none of the great issues has been resolved. There is recurring tension in and around Berlin, in Laos and Vietnam, in parts of Africa, along the Sino-Indian frontier, in the Middle East, in the Caribbean and elsewhere. But there seems now to be more of a will, more of a desire, to seek peaceful settlements to stubborn problems. This improvement may soon fade before the test of policy and action. But it exists now, and we should take full advantage of it.

#### Test-Ban Treaty

Its most striking evidence, as has already been pointed out by the representative of Brazil, is the recent partial nuclear test-ban treaty between three nuclear powers, since adhered to by more than 90 states. Even by itself, that treaty is immensely valuable in putting an end to the poisoning